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EDITORIAL COMMENT

GOOD WILL TO MEN

We think of it once a year, when the Christmas bells are pealing it forth and when the Christmas greens are refreshing our eyes. It is easy at this season to do little extra kindnesses, to overlook human frailties, to pull with our fellow workers instead of opposing them, to remember goodness and mercy in caring for our patients. Wouldn't it be a changed world if this same spirit could be carried through the year?

The nursing profession has had so many obstacles to overcome, so many righteous battles to fight, so many standards to uphold, that we are in danger of doing all our work in a pugilistic spirit, and that is not the spirit that succeeds. We forget, sometimes, that doctors, boards of managers, social workers, friends and families of our patients, are really working for the same ends that we have in view: the care of those who are ill, prevention of illness, education in right living. If the hospital superintendent would come nearer to her students, her board, and her medical staff; if the public health nurse would enter each home with a real desire to help, as well as to advise; if the private duty nurse would make the needs of her patient her first and greatest concern, the public would begin to change its attitude toward us. We have too often been antagonistic to everyone who did not agree with us, and we are seeing a reflection of this in the attitude which is now taken by many lay people toward the trained nurse. It is not enough to fancy ourselves of value,—we must really meet a human need.

Let us try to make the Christmas spirit our own, let us make Good Will to Men, the spirit of our work.

MISTAKEN MEASURES FOR MEETING THE SHORTAGE OF NURSES

Ever since the days of Florence Nightingale, when for the first time standards for the training of nurses were established, there have been groups of people opposed to those standards. Our efforts for

providing the best preparation of nurses for their work have had the support of the most enlightened and progressive men and women, medical and lay. Undoubtedly this portion of the community will always be with us. Opposed to us, always, are those who seek to pull down our standards from one of three reasons: ignorance as to what those standards are; professional jealousy on the part of the poorly prepared or narrow minded medical men; and commercialism. If we are sure we are dealing with those who are ignorant, it pays to try to enlighten them, the other two classes are probably hopeless and will never change their attitude.

The thing that is needed, whenever opposition arises, is that nurses themselves should think clearly, should answer honest criticism carefully and calmly, and that they should hold fast to their ideals, undiscouraged.

In Delaware, at a recent meeting of the State Medical Association there was discussion regarding the shortage of nurses and resolutions were adopted recommending short courses of training for public health nurses, the removal of registered nurses from the public health field, in large part, the establishment of a two-year minimum course of training for nurses, and the establishment of courses for attendants. In the newspaper comments on this action, doctors were quoted as objecting to the Standard Curriculum and to the inclusion of the subject of Bacteriology in a nurse's training. If these men are willing to discuss the matter fairly, it will be easy to explain to them that only an elementary course in bacteriology is given as part of the nurse's training and that those who later specialize in the subject, take post-graduate courses as a special preparation. As to the Standard Curriculum, it is not put out by the American Nurses' Association, as seems to be the idea of the Delaware medical men, but is a publication of the National League of Nursing Education, expressing an ideal,—the most that can be expected from the schools of highest standing.

At a recent meeting of the Delaware State Nurses' Association, Miss Moran, the president, expressed the opinion of the members on these points as follows:

The proposed course for public health nurses would be a menace, for while these women could carry out a few of the technical orders, their limited education in nursing would not fit them to go into the homes and detect the conditions which should be reported to the physician and the health authorities. They could be very useful as public health assistants but could not be expected to be of educational value in the cause of disease prevention.

Instead of being over-trained the vast majority of the nurses here would be materially benefited by more training. If the Medical Society feels that these nurses are over-trained, at least the general public has not so found it. The type

of young women who felt the training was excessive and for this reason were deterred from entering our hospitals, are not desired in the profession, for serious cases could not be trusted to their judgment.

If the training schools of Delaware lower their standards, the hospitals will very soon have no students, as educated young women will go to other states, rather than train in a state with standards so low they could not be registered in other states by reciprocity.

At the last session of the legislature, the State Nurses' Association tried to pass a bill to license practical nurses or attendants, as they should be called, and to reduce the minimum time of training in a general hospital to two years; not that they believe a nurse can be properly trained in two years, but to allow credits for pre-nursing courses and to college women, and to enable women who graduated outside of Delaware several years ago and took a two-year general course which was later improved by special courses, to register in this state, also to reduce the minimum educational requirements from full high school education to one year high school or its equivalent. This was opposed by the Medical Society at that time. Evidently they see their mistake, as they now include these conditions in their resolutions.

A law which provides for a minimum time of two years, for the training of nurses in general hospitals, takes care of the special groups of nurses enumerated by Miss Moran, but for the majority of students, who have had no college or pre-nursing courses, three years are none too long in which to prepare them to meet the demands put upon all nurses after they graduate. A two-year minimum in a state law means the least that will be accepted, not the goal to be desired.

Nurses as well as doctors feel the need of a class of trained attendants, as was evidenced by the action of the American Nurses' Association at Cleveland, in 1918, when the establishment of such courses was endorsed. In order to safeguard this training, all who care for the sick, nurses and attendants, should be licensed and classified, and the courses of study for both should be outlined and regulated by state law. If this is done, there should be no confusion between them such as will arise if two groups of nurses are created.

For this reason we believe the Wisconsin League of Nursing Education is mistaken in its proposed plan to grant the degree of R.N., after 1924, only to nurses whose preliminary education is a full high school course or its equivalent, providing, at the same time, for the training of nurses whose preliminary education has been less thorough, calling them graduate nurses, but not allowing them to become registered nurses until they shall make up the required number of points representing a full high school course. If such a law is passed, there will be created two classes of nurses, one eligible for registration and one not. Those who are not eligible, will be barred from membership in their alumnae, district, state, and national associations, as all these have registration as a requirement. No one

should be trained and graduated as a nurse who will not be given a place in her profession after graduation.

A PARABLE

Suppose we lived in mediæval times, when there were dragons to fight. Suppose a den of these creatures was located near our town and we were in constant danger from their attacks. Suppose our best weapons were bows and arrows, and we had a band of skilled archers whose duty it was to patrol the land and to maim or kill as many of the monsters as possible, so as to keep down and, if possible, exterminate them. Suppose each citizen were asked at one period of the year to make or purchase arrows for the use of these bands,—do you suppose they would be willing to do so? Would you, if you had lived in that day and under those conditions?

This is the time of year when each of us is asked to buy Christmas seals. We may, if we like, consider each seal as an arrow to be used to fight a common foe. Need we carry the comparison further? Who will furnish an arrow. And how many?

In commenting on what tuberculosis costs the nation, R. T. Solensten, assistant secretary of the National Safety Council, says:

From two and one-half to five years of life per individual in the United States can be saved by eradicating tuberculosis. If the net production of each person be placed at \$100 per year, which is a moderate estimate, this means a prospective saving of twenty-five to fifty billion dollars to the people of this country. These are conclusions reached by the National Tuberculosis Association on the basis of figures compiled by its research secretary, Jessamine S. Whitney, and Dr. Louis I. Dublin, statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Such estimates are valuable because they focus attention upon the relation of health to production and the losses which are now sustained by industry as a result of the prevalence of tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis is not a disease of industrial life alone, yet the conditions under which men and women work frequently constitute an important factor in its causation. To the extent that employers fail to provide sanitary working conditions and careful medical supervision for their workmen, industry is morally if not legally responsible for the spread of this disease.

It is not an idle dream to contemplate the good which will follow if tuberculosis be wiped out, because it is a preventable disease and in time it can be completely eradicated, but it will take a serious, persistent, concerted fight on the part of the whole nation to do it. When tuberculosis is finally eliminated, the productive power of industry will be tremendously strengthened, all the evil social consequences and effects of the disease will tend to disappear, and the sum total of human happiness will be enlarged.

CARELESS PEOPLE

One would not believe there are so many careless people in the world unless she had had the privilege of looking over a large

morning's mail, particularly a mail like the JOURNAL'S where money is received for various purposes.

Nurses who cannot get a money order will sew silver pieces between bits of cardboard; others put them loose with bills in an envelope. In either case, it is perfectly evident to anyone who handles the envelope that there is coin inside, and it is a testimony to the honesty of our postal employees that so seldom is such money lost in transit. In other cases, the money for the renewal of a subscription may be sent by check with no accompanying letter, and only a search of the subscription file to find some one whose name is the same as that of the signer of the check, affords a clue. Others are careful to put their street address in the letter, but neglect to add the city and the state. Dozens, and this is not an exaggeration, trust to our finding the full address on the outside of the envelope. We have learned to regard envelopes as precious and they are never thrown aside until the letter has been scanned to see how much information it will give, taken alone. A smudgy postmark is a valued guidepost at times.

Then there is handwriting! When one knows she does not write clearly, she should print her name and address as well as writing it. Sometimes an enthusiast will begin a communication on a postcard and will find she has so much to say that the card can hardly hold it all. What is crowded out in this instance? Why the signature, of course.

Lastly, consider the subject of abbreviations. People who live in Florida, Ohio, and Wisconsin, probably understand what the symbols, "Jax," "Cols." "Cti," and "Mil," mean, but it is not always clear to those outside the state.

Money comes to us for various purposes,—to pay for subscriptions, for advertisements, or for books; for the Memorial Fund and for the Relief Fund. It is very necessary that we should know exactly what is intended by the sender of money; yet the senders, themselves, are so trustful that they send sums as large as \$100 with only the signature to the check as a guide for its use.

What happens when nurses change their addresses, as 423 of our subscribers did during October? A large proportion of these are thoughtful, careful people, who write us promptly, giving the old and new addresses,—and all such deserve to get their magazines without a hitch or a delay, provided the notice has reached us well in advance of the change. The others do nothing for six or seven months and then write us that they have not been getting their JOURNALS and that they would like all the missing copies. They add, as an afterthought, that their address was changed last spring. We have not been

unmindful of them all this time, however, nor has the Post Office Department which certainly tries hard to keep mail going where it should. When the postmaster notifies us that the JOURNAL cannot be delivered because the subscriber "Moved, left no address," we send stamps for the return of the magazines, we try to get in touch with the nurse, herself, and failing that, we take her card from the file and her stencil from the tray of the addressograph machine, make note of all these things, and wait patiently,—but not with folded hands,—until she remembers that she has not had a JOURNAL for some time and notifies us sternly that she will not renew her subscription unless we are more businesslike. Such incidents make us smile and sigh, they are part of the day's work, but they are offset by the many comments of another kind tucked in with business letters,—expressions of appreciation, confidence and enjoyment, none of which fall to the ground unnoticed. They cheer us and give us courage to go on, trying, like the impartial sun, to bless both the just and the unjust.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO NURSES

The Children's Bureau which has put out so many interesting and helpful leaflets of use to nurses who are caring for babies or young children, has now issued a pamphlet of study outlines, called Child Welfare Programs. It deals with such subjects as Children in Industry, Infant Mortality, etc. Under each heading are topics for papers and discussion, and these are followed by a list of references for reading or study. District or alumnae associations would find these good topics for meetings. Too often our members are ignorant of the broader fields of work so closely allied to our own, and it will do us good to devote a meeting or two to making ourselves better acquainted with the work being done for children by other workers than nurses.

The American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology has recently made its appearance, taking the place of the American Journal of Obstetrics and Diseases of Children which was discontinued last winter. This first number has articles by well known obstetricians and gynecologists, with illustrations. It is, of course, a medical magazine, but nurses working in these fields will find much that is of value to them, keeping them in touch with the latest methods and the reasons for their adoption. The subscription price of the magazine is \$6.00.

A pamphlet explaining the provisions of the Sheppard-Towner bill has recently been issued by the Law Reporting Service of the Young Women's Christian Association.

This pamphlet explains the Maternity and Infancy Bill which provides for public protection of maternity and infancy by a method of coöperation between the Federal and State governments, and portrays the conditions which make some national program imperative. It presents in condensed and readable form the results of authoritative studies made by groups working in the particular fields, showing the general conditions of maternal and infant welfare, what experiments are being made in various sections to reduce mortality, and with what success they are being carried on. Included with a summary of the bill, with its present revisions, are statistics compiled by the Children's Bureau, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and other groups.

For organizations, physicians, nurses, and others who wish to learn about the measure and interest their communities in it, the pamphlet is an excellent source of information.

Copies of the pamphlet may be purchased from the Woman's Press of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, 600 Lexington Avenue, New York.

RE-REGISTRATION

We want to call the attention of all nurses in New York State to the fact that they must register, or re-register before January 1st, if they wish to be free to practice as trained or registered nurses under the new law. The waiver expires on January 1st, so there is no time to be lost. No examination is required if other requisites are fulfilled. Directions for registering will be found in *Nursing News* under the New York heading.

FREE RADIUM TREATMENT

The legislature of New York State has purchased radium to the amount of two and one-quarter grams, at an expense of \$250,000, for the use of the people of the state who are suffering from cancer and for research work. The Institute for the Study of Malignant Diseases at Buffalo will have charge of this precious metal and will give the treatment free of charge.

THE NIGHTINGALE CALENDAR

We again remind our readers that a Florence Nightingale calendar has been prepared with quotations for every day in the year from Miss Nightingale's writings. The price is \$1.00 and it may be ordered from Miss Albaugh, National Nursing Headquarters, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York. The proceeds will be used for the maintenance of Central Headquarters.

A CORRECTION

On page 116 of the November JOURNAL, in the notice of the proceedings of the American Hospital Association, it should have been specified that the excellent report of the survey by the Committee on Nursing was presented by Mary C. Wheeler, who also represented the Nursing Committee of the American Hospital Conference.